

# DIGGING A BIG DITCH.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE ON THE HENNEPIN.

Difficulties Overcome by the Engineers and an Army of Men Now Engaged in Digging the Channel—Some Notable Features of the Enterprise.

### Work Commenced.

The Hennepin Canal is under full way at last. It has been a canal on paper for years, but up to the present time there has been a good deal more wind than water in it, and among

was broken on the first contract July 12, 1892. This was done at the mouth of Rock River, south side, and on the spot where the excavation for lock 37 is to be. The contractor is Commodore Andrew J. Whitney, of Rock Island, Ill., and his accepted bid covers the excavation of the lock-pit, driving of piles and placing of timbers in the foundation, and delivering of 5,200 cubic feet of sand and gravel for concreting bottom.

A mile of canal trunk is a busy place when a couple of hundred teams, with implements and men to match, are constantly traversing it, and this

every reason to believe that the \$500,000 first appropriated will cover the cost of construction of this lower section, which has been above described,



THE CAMP ON CAMP ISLAND.

including the guard lock and the dams across Rock river. Upon the completion of this section the water will be backed up by these dams so that at low water the Rock river will be navigable—seven-foot stage to Green river, and at high water to Penny's slough, twenty-seven miles from the Mississippi. In all \$1,000,000 is available, however, and the work will advance far enough in another summer to make a great showing of the utility and importance of the canal. Its friends hope it will command additional money as it may be needed.

The workmen employed by the engineers and the contractors are mostly transients—men who follow the various pieces of government work about the country. There are also a number of residents in these employes and most of the teams belong to men who live in the vicinity.

### Romantic Associations.

The region is not without its romantic associations. Just sixty years ago Abraham Lincoln and other Illinois lads were in camp here, quarantined because they had the cholera. They came here to finish up the Black Hawk war, and the disease broke out among them. Not long ago the excavators turned out some skeletons. No one living here knows anything about how they came there. They may have been Indians, but they are guessed again to have been the victims of the plague.

On the north shore of Rock River rises a steep, rocky bluff. It has been known as Black Hawk's watch-tower for years. While he was among the whites here that famous chief made mention of it as an outlook of his, and the name seems to have been honestly given. A year or so ago I. H. Louderback, of Chicago, President of the Tri-city Street Railway Company of Davenport, Rock Island, and Moline, purchased this property. He transformed the shabby old house on the summit into a graceful half-Moresque summer hotel, which he calls the Black Hawk Inn, and revamped the dummy trains into an electric car service. Now the pride and the fashion of the three cities and surrounding country flock here in thousands through a long season to gaze upon the outspread beauties of Rock River, eat, drink, dance and make merry.

### The Buffalo's Cup.

A traveler describes a strange formation in Mitchell County, Texas, which, in our time at least, will be a reminder of the days when the buffalo roamed the plains of the great West. "At the junction of two creeks," he writes, "is a bed of friable gray sandstone mixed with coarse gravel. Water passing over the edge has worn away a part of it, and has created a fall of thirty feet. The loose gravel carried round and round in the eddies has gradually bored holes in the sandstone. These holes are from three to six feet wide, circular and from fifty to a hundred feet deep. There are from fifteen to twenty of them, all filled with fresh water. By the long-continued churning of the gravel they have been made jug-shaped or cistern-like, and in some instances the wall dividing the two wells has been cut through. This must have been a favorite watering place with the buffalo. In the solid rock is cut a deep trail down to the water. And where the descent is steepest the footmarks are over six inches deep, showing that every animal passing there put its foot exactly in the spot occupied by those which had preceded it."

### As to Betting.

Lay no wagers.—King Charles' Twelve Good Rules.  
I'll toss you for it if you'll stake me.—Sterne's "Tristram Shandy."  
There is no sympathy for the busted better.—Mark Twain.  
The kuss that has no brains ken still stick his money up.—Josh Billings.  
I'll bet you anything—even that the sun does not rise to-morrow.—Charles Lever's "Knight of Gwynne."  
Quoth she, I've heard old cunning stagers say fools for arguments use wagers.—Butler's "Hudibras."  
For most men (till by losing rendered sager) will back their own opinion by a wager.—Byron's "Beppo."  
The man who bets with a gamster is a fool. The man who wagers with a friend is a fraud.—Bulwer's "What Will He Do with It?"  
I do not want your money, man. I've cast the stake of life on this. Think you a few plasters would console the end?—"Old Play" (Scott).

The popular subscription of \$13,000 raised in New York City to provide for sick babies did a great work. Over 116,000 families were visited and over 10,000 sick were prescribed for.

In Lapland the fashion of a woman's dress changes only once in a thousand years, and the dry-goods stores never advertise.

# IN HUMANITY'S CAUSE.

Labors of Two English Sisters in Cholera-Stricken Hamburg.

Disinterested labor in the service of others is something we all admire, but when it is coupled with grave physical danger, such as exposure to fatal disease, heroism can alone express it. Heroic, we must confess was the action of Father Damien, who labored among the lepers of Molokai and laid down his life on the altar of human brotherhood; heroic, too, is the effort being made by Miss Kate

Marsden to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate lepers in the forests and jungles of Siberia, and in the same category must be placed the two sisters, Misses Kenealey, who labored with enthusiasm and devotion in caring for the cholera patients in Hamburg, Germany. When the plague there was at its height and an average of 1,000 persons were stricken daily, these English ladies, regardless of personal danger, rushed to the aid of the Hamburg sufferers. Not only did they act as nurses, but by their letters they enabled the English medical profession to profit by their experiences.

Very generally when life is at stake and one is at close grip with death self-preservation becomes paramount. It is then that the pure gold and alloy in our nature becomes separated, and then can we best appreciate the disinterested labors of others for their kind.

### Royal Insignia.

In a guarded room of the great gray castle which overlooks the royal city of Edinburgh are preserved the ancient regalia of Scotland, the insignia of the sovereignty of the kingdom before it was united to England. Perhaps there is nothing dearer to the Scotchman's heart than these old symbols of the old-time glory of his country.

There is the crown of Robert the Bruce, which he wore as a simple circlet of gold at the battle of Bannockburn. It was afterward so encrusted with rubies, diamonds, and emeralds that it rested with the weight of five pounds upon the uneasy head of the king who wore it.

The scepter with which the gallant King James V. first ruled over his subjects is a slight rod of silver a little more than three feet in length, ornamented with three figures of the Virgin and the patron saints of Scotland when Scotland believed in saints. The handle is crowned with a large crystal beryl, an ancient Stone of Power in which the Druids divined the future.

Beside these there are the sword of state and decorations and orders belonging to Scottish kings.

These treasures have a strange history. When Charles I. was beheaded they were in the keeping of Ogilvy, Governor of Castle Dinnottar. To protect them from Cromwell's soldiers they were given to a Mrs. Granger, wife of the minister of a little church near Dinnottar. She and her husband dug a hole before the pulpit at night, and then buried them.

Dinnottar Castle was taken by the Puritans, and the governor, the minister, and their wives were put to the torture to force them to reveal where the regalia were hidden. One of the women, it is said, died on the rack, but they all kept the secret until Charles II. was restored.

At the time of the legislative union between England and Scotland, in 1707 the jealous Scots again hid the regalia, this time in a huge oak chest in a room of the castle. There they remained unknown for a hundred and eleven years, when the dungeons were searched and the chest opened by a commission, of which Sir Walter Scott was the chief, and the royal insignia were found whole and unharmed.

It is said that a mighty shout went up from Edinburgh that day, and that old men and children wept for joy. Since then the regalia are cherished by Scotland as the emblems of her days of freedom and power.

Americans have no visible sign of the strength and character of their country but the flag. No cruel or brutal king can besmirch its fair folds in the eyes of the world, but every boy who reads these lines can do it.

Just as he shall make the name of an American respected and honored among men he will add to its respect and honor.—Youth's Companion.

### Manna.

The manna of commerce comes chiefly from Sicily. It is a sweet substance, obtained from a small tree which is known as the manna ash. This tree can be grown as far north as England, but in that country it yields no manna, and is cultivated for ornament only. The manna is formed from the sap. The trees are ready to be tapped at the age of eight years, when the stems have a diameter of about three inches. The tapping is done by making cuts through the bark to the wood, the incisions being one or two inches long, and about an inch apart.

The first cut is made at the lower part of the trunk. The next year the untouched part of the stem is operated upon in the same way, and the practice is continued in successive years till the tree is exhausted. The finest manna is that which is incrustated around pieces of stick or

straws placed in the incisions. Flake manna is that which has hardened on the trunk. The inferior quality is from the lower incision. After its removal from the tree the manna is dried on shelves.

There are other plants that yield a similar product. The tamarisk of Arabia exudes from its branches a substance that becomes solid in the cool of the morning. This is known as tamarisk honey. The exudation is assisted by the puncture of a small insect. It is said that this honey is described by native writers as a dew which falls upon the leaves of the tamarisk and other trees.

The Persians gather a kind of manna from a leguminous plant by shaking its branches, or by picking the leaves and gently beating them over a cloth when dry. Throughout Persia and Afghanistan naturally produced manna is harvested from different trees and shrubs. It is eaten by the people as a sweetmeat, and is exported to India.

In Australia a sweet substance is obtained by the natives from the sandalwood. It is a favorite article of food with them and with the colonists. The manna gathered from the leaves of the eucalyptus is rather a product of insects. The exudation of the sap is due to the puncturing of the leaves, and the same is supposed to be the origin of the manna which is collected from the twigs of certain species of oak.

The notion of the Arabs that the manna was a dew deposited upon the leaves of shrubs reminds us that we have the phenomenon of honey-dew on leaves of the elm in this country. It is to be observed on hot and dry days in August. The upper surface of the leaves becomes varnished with a soluble sweet gum, much resorted to by insects in the morning. It hardens in the hot sun. This appears to be a true natural exudation of sap from the leaves, caused by excessive heat. There is no indication of the leaves, caused by excessive heat. There is no indication of the leaves being punctured; the visits of the insects are a result, not a cause.—Youth's Companion.

### Wild Goose Story.

Last winter D. W. Little, one of the adobe farmers on the west of town, shot into a band of geese. A white gander was struck and had one wing broken. Mr. Little took the goose home and gave him to his boys, who doctored his wing and he soon became so tame as to follow the boys wherever they went, eat from their hands and even poke his head into their pockets for corn and wheat.

A few days ago a band of wild geese flying over the premises and making their usual clatter attracted the attention of the domesticated gander, which gave an outlandish display of quacking and shrill yells in goose language that had a most startling effect with the band flying past. A fine white goose was seen to leave the band and shoot down until it landed in the yard at the side of the pet, and the meeting was demonstrative to an exciting degree. Their gabbling, quacking and amusing antics afforded as much fun for the boys who witnessed the meeting as they could have found at a circus. The new arrival, which is probably a mate of the now tame goose, refuses to leave, but will fly over the fence when the two are approached by the boys, and then fly back to the mate when the boys step aside.—Briggs (Cal.) Argus.

### Why Do We Wear Mourning?

The custom is outworn: it is an anachronism in the nineteenth century, says the North American Review. It is unchristian; it clouds the spiritual significance of the resurrection with the ever present expression of temporal loss. It is cruel; it forces helpless and innocent people into action, which entails privation and unnecessary suffering. It is untruthful; it makes false outward show of changes in sentiment. And it is essentially vulgar; for it presses private affairs upon public notice; it thrusts claims of fashion and frivolity upon a time which most greatly moves the heights and depths of being; and it forces its superficial worldliness into the fiercest throes which can ever rend human nature. Why, then, do we still wear mourning?

### How a Merchant in Ohio Failed.

A queer story is told by the Cincinnati Times-Star as to the failure of a Clermont County merchant a few weeks ago. While in that city he was attracted by the watches displayed in a pawnshop window, and stepped inside to examine them. Two or three persons from his village happened to pass and saw him. They went home and gossiped about the matter. A report was spread that he was hard up, and had been seen pawing his watch in Cincinnati. The report injured his business, and his creditors also began to press him. In a short time he was compelled to make an assignment.

### To Keep Guns from Rusting.

The best way to preserve a gun from rusting is to have a ring of zinc soldered round the barrel, or if it is not convenient to do this, to have a long strip of zinc soldered out of sight underneath the barrel. The galvanic action which is excited between the zinc and the iron effectually prevents the oxidation of either metal, and as long as the zinc remains in contact with the iron not a particle of rust will appear on either the inside or outside of the barrel.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

The new spring crop of Ward McAllister pictures in the New York papers show the conservator of "the four hundred" full of the ginger of youth and a diminished bald spot.

# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

## THOUGHTS WORTHY OF CALM REFLECTION.

A Pleasant, Interesting, and Instructive Lesson and Where It May Be Found—A Learned and Concise Review of the Same.

### The Apostle's Council.

The lesson for Sunday, Dec. 11, may be found in Acts 15: 12-29.

### INTRODUCTORY.

Here is the account of a model church meeting. First, the difficulty or difference is honestly stated in open church meeting, as when we read at v. 5 that the Pharisee Christians rose up and declared their mind on the question of circumcision. Second, various churches with their pastors, the apostles of course being present (v. 6), meet with the Jerusalem church to consider the matter. Third, the discussion is frank and generous and thorough. It is not clamorous, as the word disputing at v. 7 (properly rendered inquiry) might seem to imply. The question is stated, the Scripture is doubtless quoted and its apparent disregard alleged. Then Peter speaks, and is given a respectful hearing. Saul and Barnabas come next, the multitude (it was not a synod of elders) keeping orderly and attentive silence. Finally James of great repute among the early disciples and justly so, gives his judgment (krino) not "sentence." The ultimate discussion is reached when at last "it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men to Antioch, bearing this instrument as the conclusion of the council, ratified by the local church, namely (omitting the preamble): That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled and from fornication; from which, if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." Wise counsel, just and sensible restrictions. The motion made by James has carried. God has brought his people safely out of another threatening Egyptian bondage, and the kingdom of Christ, like a promised land, lies fair and open before them.

### WHAT THE LESSON SAYS.

Simon, or Simon Peter. The Hebrew name is here used, it being a Jewish name. Declared or recounted, narrated, same word as declared in v. 12, above. At the first. Peter, first. Peter was speaking of God's first presentation of the gospel to Gentiles in the household of Cornelius.—Visit, Greek, to look upon, or, as we say in familiar conversation, look in upon.—A peep for his name, or, to his name, i. e., planted on his name. The word take may be rendered receive.

To this agrees the word of the prophets. The verb is that from which comes our word symphony (sound together), literally, symphonize.

My sentence is. Not necessarily. My judgment, or personal decision rather. Greek: (krino) I judge, I decide. It was not James but the whole assembly, we gather, who settled this question. Or, we may say, separate churches on their recommendation.—Turned to God. The term frequently translated converted. Acts 3: 19; John 12: 40.

### WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.

Then all the multitude kept silent. A brilliant burst of silence, an effective seal passage in the midst of the controversy. "Stop and think." When we are all ready for that we are well on our way toward full unanimity and the "one accord" of which v. 25 so happily speaks. There had been no uproar or unseemly contention here. But doubtless there were deep convictions stirred on either side, and the positions had been stated, we may judge, with straightness and strength. But now Peter has uttered himself in quiet, tender words. That last reference of his to the gentle "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" is enough. Then ensues a kind of reverent silence. And here occurs what perhaps would have been difficult before: Paul and Barnabas rise to speak their mind. The Heavenly Father is in the midst.

I will set it up. Christ is in the world to set up that which is fallen down. Humanity is like a temple in ruins, spoiled and dismantled by sin. Jesus Christ restores the lost strength and beauty. We are thinking just now of that poor, infirm woman in the synagogue, all bent and bowed together, a broken temple indeed. "And he laid his hands upon her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God." Christ is here to straighten out that which is crooked. He wants it to glorify God, and it can best do that by standing upright. Are you and I ready to be straightened out, to be set up? Perhaps some further bondage and breakage is needed before the straightening and edifying process can begin. Are we ready for it? Lord, make me. But to that end unmake, break me. In every event, let God be glorified in these bodies and spirits which are his.

It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us. A blessed partnership, the Holy Ghost and the believer. Now I understand the wonderful tactfulness of the message, and withal its tenderness; some other than the human hand and mind is here. God is in it. It is an inspired communication. Of such is all the Biblical record and revelation. It seemed good to the spirit and to man. The two were united in it; it was human and divine; humanly divine, divinely human. And though this may be said in a peculiar and exclusive way of the writer of the sacred oracles, it has also an application to every humble Christian of to-day who takes those oracles as lamp and light. Such a guidance of the Spirit is granted us in the ordinary affairs of life that we may believe that, with the prayerful, Bible-taught soul, what is "good to the Holy Spirit" shall be revealed to us also as "good." And so we shall be led by the Spirit.

### The World's Happenings.

Houses are insured against burglary.

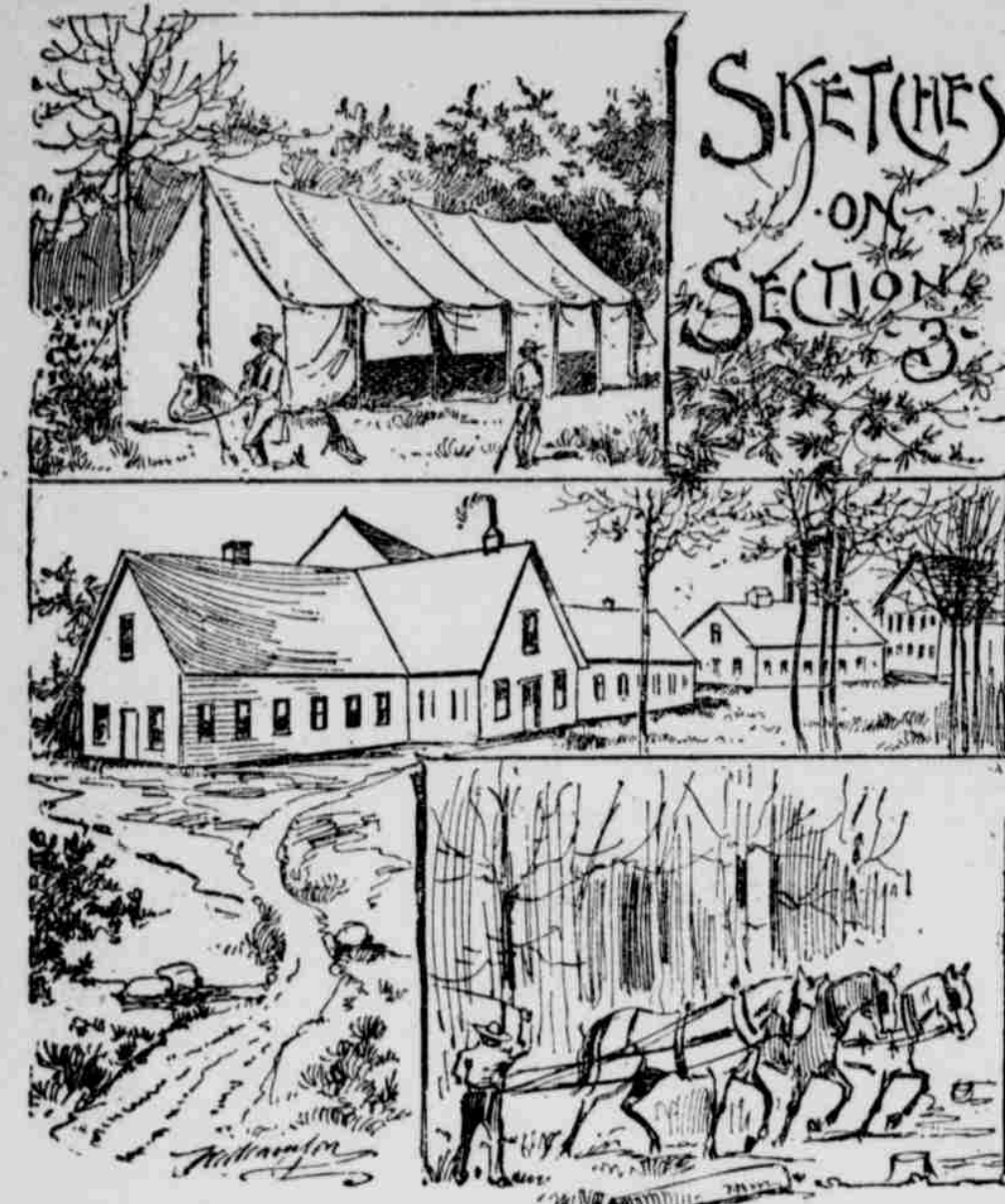
KINGSTON, N. Y., has a highwayman but 12 years old.

Dr. MAURIER, the London artist, is blind in one eye.

The Chinese paper currency is red, white, and yellow.

The Emperor of China has begun the study of arithmetic.

Nearly two hundred kinds of the things called toadstools are at least edible.



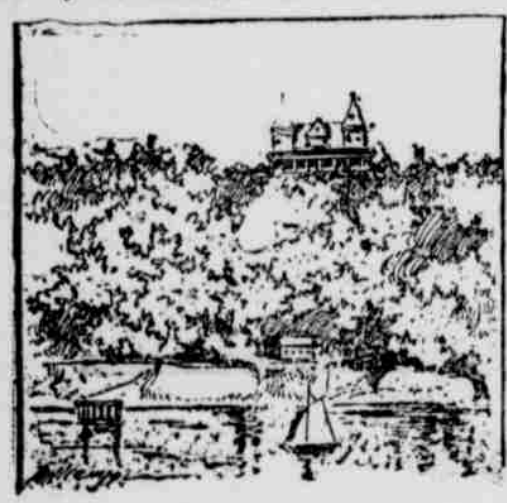
CAMP SCENES ON THE LINE OF THE CANAL.

those people who were inclined to oppose it, for one reason or another, it had almost drifted into a byword and a mockery. These people would be surprised to see the progress that has been made on it since work was actively commenced this summer. It

is what is seen all the way between lock 37 and Silver Lake and for a mile on the upper side of Silver Lake. The huge embankments look like parallel railroad grades, with a deep trench between them. Where they have been finished they look as though they had been "sand-papered," as the railroad men say of a piece of especially trim ballasted track. The numerous parties of visitors generally drive through the canal, threading their way among men and teams and finding much to interest them.

### Plans and Appropriations.

The Hennepin Canal takes its name from the little town of Hennepin, situated on the Illinois River, in Putnam County. The western terminus is at the mouth of Rock River as it enters the Mississippi, and its eastern terminus is at its entrance to the Illinois River a little above the town just mentioned. The estimated cost of this entire work is \$6,925,960. This estimate, it is thought, is ample unless contingencies should arise. The Hennepin is a part of the water route projected to connect the Mississippi with Lake Michigan. The approved plans of the engineer corps contemplate a water route from the lake to the Illi-



BLACK HAWK'S WATCH TOWER.

will be but a short time till a long stretch of canal trunk will be ready for use, writes a Milan, Ill., correspondent in the Chicago Herald.

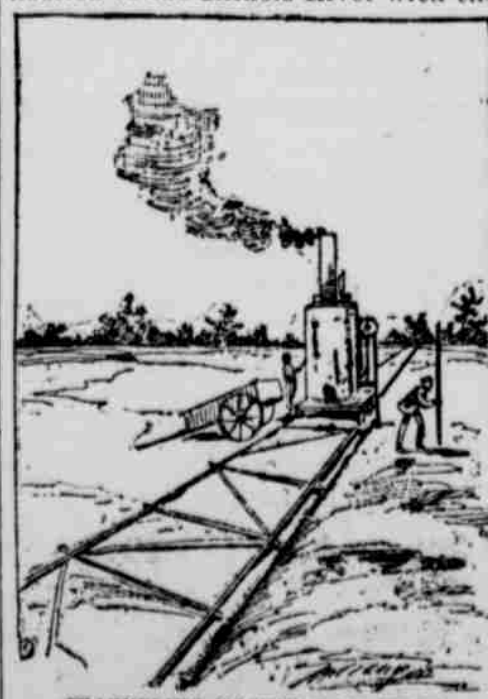
In the fall of 1890 Captain L. L. Wheeler, a veteran in hydrographic



CANAL TRUNK COMPLETED, FIRST MILE.

and other important and particular government work, was assigned to this field to make surveys and build the canal. He located the route, as narrated, secured the right of way after encountering many difficulties, some of which were only settled in the courts, and staked out the line of the canal. He had with him several competent, hard working young engineers as assistants, and much was accomplished by way of preliminary test pits, to show the nature of the substrata, were sunk all over the line of the canal. Engineers and contractors knew before they touched the work what sort of excavation they would have at every point. Rock River was sounded in thousands of places; its volume, velocity, and fluctuations of stage were recorded, and its levels accurately ascertained. Complete maps, showing every detail of surface and formation, were prepared. The contractors had no chance to bid in the dark. As actual preliminary work the line of the canal trunk was cleared of trees and brush and inclosed with miles of pig-tight wire fence; a stone quarry was opened, a macadam road built so that cement and other supplies might be hauled in spite of bad weather, and houses for storing material and quarantining men were erected. There was a tremendous amount of detail to all this, but nothing was omitted. Ground

nois River at some day. When this is constructed the Hennepin will be half the routes between the river and lake. The present Illinois and Michigan Canal would furnish such a connection of the Illinois River with the



CHANNELING MACHINES AT WORK.

lake, but its small size does not render it practicable. The size of the barges used would be limited to its capacity.

As for the Hennepin, there is now